

Point three

August 1994

The magazine of TOC H



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Ordination of Women Priests

The Birmingham Community House

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Point three



The Magazine of Toc H

Toc H is a movement of people who seek to build friendships, and offer service, across the barriers that usually divide us from one another. The basic unit is a group - at best a good cross-section of the local neighbourhood - which meets together regularly, and seeks to serve the community around it. Toc H was founded in 1915 by the Revd P B 'Tubby' Clayton, and since then has been providing opportunities for people to test the Christian way by practical experiment.

All members pledge themselves to try:

1. *To welcome all in friendship and lessen by habit of thought, word and deed the prejudices which separate people.*
2. *To give personal service.*
3. *To find their own convictions while listening with respect to the views of others.*
4. *To acknowledge the spiritual nature of man and to test the Christian way by trying it.*

This magazine is a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world, as well as a record of Toc H service. Its title derives from the third of these Four Points. Letters, articles and news items are welcomed and should be addressed to The Editor, *Point three*, at the address below.

Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H movement.

Point three is available from Toc H Headquarters. Price: 30p per copy or £3.60 per annum. Any contribution towards the high cost of postage will be gratefully accepted.

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Cover: 'Girls Talk' Project

Photo: Sue Huddleston



Point three is printed on wood-free elemental chlorine-free (ECF) paper

Paid To Live

We live in changing times and Toc H must change to keep pace with them. In the light of recent legislation, for instance, we have no choice but to keep fuller and more careful accounts at all levels. The current emphasis on publicising more effectively the good work that we do is obviously right. There is a clear need to be more precise in the way in which we deal with our employees. Change may sometimes be painful to those of us who have been around for a long time; but we have an obligation to support it if Toc H is to become relevant to the next century.

But we have another obligation - to try to identify just what was good about 'the good old days'. What precisely is it that we need to cling to through all the inevitable changes? We may become a very efficient charitable business and yet lose what it was that made Toc H, at its best, unique. More efficient management can become mechanistic, emphasising numbers to the exclusion of the spirit.

The retirement of Bill Bains reminds me that in the far off days when he joined the staff we used to say, only partly in jest, that we employed people simply to live. Many of them were people whom we had spotted and nurtured, whom we felt we couldn't afford *not* to employ, and we encouraged them to be themselves as fully and completely as they could. We didn't give them a detailed brief. We didn't give them a list of functions which they were required to perform. We simply asked them to be alert to the possibilities that presented themselves, to initiate whatever seemed right to them and to their local members. Nobody told Peter East to work with the Bangladeshi community. Nobody told Adrian Dudman to launch the first Friendship Circle. These were simply opportunities which they saw and were able to grasp.

That approach liberated some and frightened others and I'm not suggesting we should go back to it. But it enshrined an important truth. All of us as Toc H members, paid or voluntary, are invited to contribute the whole of ourselves. We're not functionaries with specific and limited tasks to perform but part of a Movement which can use all of our talents and experience. Toc H doesn't want bits of us; it wants the whole person. And we need, too, to be alert to the ways in which the unique gifts of our fellow-members can be fully used. We are in Toc H not just to take minutes or keep accounts, not just to plan outings for elderly people or to organise the summer project, but to develop each of our gifts and to play our full part in building an ever more open, ever more caring, community of whole people. We are called not just to *do* but to *be*.

That's one of the things we must cling to through all the changes that have come and the greater changes which will surely follow. We are not a charitable business, though we must become more efficient. We are a Movement of the spirit which has the courage to tell people simply to live.

Ken Prideaux-Brune



Horbury Group visiting Colsterdale



Friendship Circle Easter Bonnet Parade



Horbury Group & Bramley Branch fill a Rotary emergency box



Mr & Mrs Eric Calvert present Vivian with the proceeds from their annual garden party

A New Toc H Group in Horbury

The coincidence of a member of our church asking what could be done about loneliness in Horbury, and staff member Bill Bains asking about the chances of development in our area, led to the formation of a new Toc H group.

The group meets on alternate Wednesdays at the Community Centre in Horbury. We try to get involved in the wider Movement and some members have attended District meetings. We all went by train to the World Chain of Light ceremony at Trinity Church, Leeds. The regional festival at Bridlington was another group occasion, and last October we hired a mini bus and had a very enjoyable day at Colsterdale.

The highlight of the year was when the new members of staff, Tom, Stuart and Barry dropped in to join us for a fish and chip supper. They talked about their respective jobs and gave the new people in the group an insight into Toc H, its staff, how it works and even more important, its aims. The group have decided to tackle two of the aims of Toc H, friendship and service by identifying loneliness as a problem in these days of scattered families.

A Friendship Circle has been formed, which meets every six to eight weeks on a Saturday afternoon, when we share entertainment, fellowship and refreshments. This is proving to be a great success, but really needs to meet more often. In order to meet this need we are hoping to get more volunteers through a community service announcement on Yorkshire Television.

During the last 18 months our Northern Ireland project has been in the forefront of all our efforts. We thought it would be a good idea to invite a mixture of protestant and catholic children to live together in Horbury for a week. Of course this has meant a lot of thought and planning.

The response to our financial appeal was very good. Contributions came in from Garforth Branch, the local Rotary, Round Table, Lions and Inner Wheel. We also received a grant from the Warden Manor Trust. At the beginning of August each year a member of our church opens her garden to the public for the day, proceeds of which go to different charities. This year, after hearing Bill Bains speak at the Ladies Circle, she chose our project and gave us £280. She said this was the most the event had ever raised.

Another friend from church gave me an Edwardian tub chair to renovate, then either to keep or dispose of as I wished. We had it auctioned and kept £100 from the proceeds for the project and gave the remaining £75 to the Church Restoration Fund.

Although our group is still small in number we feel we have achieved a lot in a very short time. This could not have been done without the help and cooperation of Wakefield Branch.

Vivian Sharman

Poverty

When I was a child there were times when I would come home with some minor upset or other. Although I was loved and cared for, my complaints about such little problems or hurts were invariably met with a rejoinder that I should count my blessings. At the time this never made me feel any better, as what I really wanted was to concentrate on my pain and elicit some sympathy.

As a teenager, faced with what I saw as insurmountable problems about schoolwork or girls or some such, I often railed against my parents for their attitude. I did not want to know that there were others worse off than me, any more than I wanted to count my blessings. In moments of teenage angst I needed all the self-pity that I could muster.

I certainly didn't realise, and I am not sure whether my parents knew, that their message was going in. Now, as an adult, I find that I do indeed count my blessings, and in the full realisation that there are people worse off than me.

There is not a day that goes by without me acknowledging how lucky I am. My work for Toc H has brought me to a very peaceful part of the country. Cuddesdon is a very spiritual and healing place. At this time of the year the cornfields around the village are full of drifts of poppies and, when the sun shines, it seems that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world.

I am able to spend much of my spare time in Oxford, surely one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The architecture of the colleges and churches combine with the attitudes of the people there to create a quite spectacular city on a very human scale. The best of Oxford reminds me of the best of Toc H. It is a place where many different people meet and make the most unlikely friendships. There is a feeling of acceptance and creativity, notwithstanding the old rivalry of 'town versus gown'.

Beggars in the Street

It is also a city that persistently reminds me that there are people who are worse off than I am. Walking around Oxford it is not possible to overlook the beggars in the street. Their dirty clothes and lined faces, old before their time, mask individuals who all have their own personal tragedies to live with. A recent survey revealed that some 60 per cent of the people living on the streets of Britain have served in the Armed Forces. What does it take to turn a proud and polished soldier into a bundle of rags in a shop doorway?

Too many of the faces you see on the streets are too young to have been in the forces. They are little



more than children, and our first thought would surely be to tell them to go home. However, many of these youngsters have left home because of abuse, either physical or sexual. For them home is a place of danger, not safety. The family is an environment of betrayal, not one of trust. On the streets they learn that the only reliable comfort in life is in a can of *Special Brew* or a bottle of cider.

There are others whom I meet who may be better off than the street people, but who live lives of spiritual as well as of financial poverty. The beauty of the English countryside hides a level of exploitation which is every bit as bad as the sweatshops of the big cities.

Young people, healthy young men and women, denied the

opportunities, proper, full-time employment, are faced with a cruel dilemma. They must choose between living on state benefits, or working for pitiful wages which are paid cash-in-hand so that their employers do not have to pay national insurance contributions. These unscrupulous employers will often make young people operate unsafe machinery, or use dangerous methods. And all for wages as low as £2 an hour.

By paying these young people in cash, and not putting them 'through the books', they are not only flouting the law themselves but are causing their employees to break the law, by preventing them from paying tax and national insurance.

We can look at the plight of the millions of people in Britain today who are living in poverty and we can choose what, if anything, to do about it. We can, giving thanks for our own good fortune, give a little of our own time and money to make life a bit easier for them. Acting individually we may accomplish little but, in concert with others, ordinary people may indeed do extraordinary deeds. In Toc H we have pledged ourselves to this path, *'to give service and... by our example to challenge our neighbours to seek the way of Christ.'*

The other course we could take would be to look at the sun and flowers, see the buildings and not the beggars, and tell ourselves that indeed nothing is wrong in the world. If people choose to live on the streets that is their affair. As long as they are not a nuisance then it is nothing to do with us.

We could think that the elderly

people, who die of cold every year because they cannot afford to light their fires, are just silly old fools who should have wrapped up warm.

Poverty in Britain

As long as people have state benefit, they may not be able to afford fancy foreign holidays, but they are not poor. Indeed, we may say, there is no such thing as poverty in Britain today.

This idea, that there is no such thing as poverty, is always propounded by those who have not themselves suffered from any lack of money. Individuals who have never wanted for anything simply do not, or will not, understand the plight of the worst off in our society. They see that poor people have TV sets and pronounce that everything is rosy.

This is not an idea which finds favour in the Inner Cities, the outer council housing estates, the pockets of rural deprivation or on the streets. People living on state benefit who have to decide whether to pay a fuel bill or replace their children's worn out shoes never make such foolish, uncaring statements.

Once you have had the experience of not eating for the day before your Giro cheque arrives, in order that your children can have a meal, then the concept of poverty ceases to be an issue for debate and becomes a part of your everyday experience.

There are a number of myths which abound about poor people in our society today, spread by those who have

never known poverty themselves. These are people, often writing in such newspapers as the Mail and the Sun, who have never known what it is like to be cold or hungry simply because there is no money to buy food or warm clothing.

The idea that young women will condemn themselves to a life of poverty, become pregnant, go through the pain of childbirth and the drudgery of bringing up a child alone, simply in order to be allocated a flat in a run-down tower block, defies all reason.

The belief that people prefer to live on the streets, spending the winter nights huddled against the cold in some shop doorway, carrying their few belongings with them everywhere, rather than in a clean warm home of their own is something which beggars belief.

These are the sort of stories which are designed to allow the uncaring in society a defence, however cheap and tawdry, for their selfishness.

In accepting the Four Points of the Compass we have pledged ourselves 'to see the needs of others as our own, to influence public opinion so that conflict may be lessened, to give personal service, and to help the truth to prevail.'

Look around you, search out the dark places. If you open your eyes to the poverty that surrounds us all, then together we in Toc H can decide what we should do to fulfil our pledge.

Robin McSorley

'You did not choose me, but I chose you' (John 15:16)

For the fourth in this series of five articles, *Ruth Boyd* spoke to *Hazel Bradley* at her home in Leicester. Hazel has been a Toc H member for seven years and was ordained priest at Leicester Cathedral on 7 May. She is 32 years of age.

The words of St John's Gospel 'You did not choose me, but I chose you' echoed throughout the period leading up to my ordination to the priesthood. They are important words for all Christians to reflect upon, not just those preparing for ordination - they are at the centre of our Christian life.

On 7 May I was one of 18 women ordained priest in Leicester Cathedral. I had been a deacon for less than two years and therefore hadn't experienced the frustration of some women in having a vocation which was unrecognised by the church. At my ordination there were several women who had remained faithful to their calling, as deaconesses then deacons for many years. Women priests have been challenged about the nature of their vocation, not only by the church and those opposed to women's ordination, but also the media.

In exploring our vocation we have had to come to terms with the apparent arguments from scripture and tradition against the ordination of women. As Anglicans, we do not stand apart from the tradition of our church or set aside the importance of scripture. One of the slants of the media, in discussing the question of women's ordination, was to express it in terms of social change and



women's rights. The argument is put over that there are women in all the professions, so why not women priests? It is my belief that ministry in the church can never be a profession as in secular life. The question of women's ordination is not a question of rights, but of duty - the duty of all Christians to follow the vocation given to them by God. By ordaining women as priests the Church of England has recognised the calling that women have felt for many years.

Ordination services throughout the country in the past weeks have expressed thankfulness over this recognition. There is also a sense of relief that, now the question has been settled, the Church of England can get on with its true mission - to witness to the truth of the Christian gospel, rather than fret about the gender of its ministers.

But we cannot ignore those people for whom the presence of women priests is a source of great distress. The spirit of Toc H, as expressed in the Four Points of the Compass, offers us all a way forward - in which those people who feel they cannot accept women priests and those of us exercising that ministry can

work together for the greater glory of God.

Toc H in My Life

I came across Toc H in Leicester. I was a student in Loughborough, about to finish my course in computers, and looking for somewhere to live. I had decided to offer myself for ordination training, rather than continue with my proposed career, when I was offered a place in the Leicester Community House.

The building was a large Victorian vicarage in the red-light district, with prostitution, drug dealing and homeless people - many with drink problems. But this location never troubled me.

I was originally going to be an historian and did a first degree in history at London University. Then I worked in a museum in Lancashire as an archivist, before going to Loughborough University to study computing and information technology.

I can't pinpoint the moment of receiving a vocational calling, because it was something that grew on me until I felt I had to do something about it. I'd been at Loughborough University for about six months before I consulted the chaplain there. He sent me to see the vocations adviser for that area, which is the first rung on the ladder towards going to a selection conference. The vocations adviser wasn't too keen on students and he imposed a number of conditions before allowing me to go further. I had to have a home and a job and a stable life. I left college three months later and the Community House fulfilled the requirement of having a home. For me it was a real gift and an ideal opportunity for obtaining the pastoral experience needed.

I moved in on the Friday and on the following Monday I began teaching computer technology at a College of Further Education in Leicester. So I had the job and I had the house and I had the pastoral experience.

I taught part-time from September to the following February and then helped set up a mobile computer facility, known as the Highfield Computer Bus, in the area where I lived. This outreach project involved taking a converted bus into Highfield to introduce people to the basics of computer studies and word processing.

Living in the Community House was an extraordinary and maturing experience. It was an incredible achievement to have such a community and it has been by far the strongest experience of my life. Within the building there was a training project for Bengali women. This provided English language lessons as well as training for work in the hosiery industry.

I lived at the Community House for two years, and took the mobile bus around for about 18 months before going on to theological college at Cuddesdon. Life was hectic, hard work and pressurised, but it changed me. It is exactly what Toc H is trying to achieve - if Toc H is actually about a commitment to sharing and listening to each other and accepting each other's point of view. There was certainly an acceptance, the feeling that you could differ but not be afraid to differ, having a bond that went deeper. That was the experience of the Community House.

There were three men and three women living there, people of different ages, different backgrounds, different politics and there was a created tension between the six of us but also the tension with the community beyond the walls of the House. It



was an experience that I would not have foregone, full of important memories - long talks into the night about life and experiences, sharing at a depth that I had never experienced before and have never found since. It was incredibly intense.

Getting to Grips with Faith

Its effect on me as a Christian is in part only obviously seen on reflection. At the time I can't honestly say it was a very happy experience. But I can see how I grew through it and gained depth. The house had its moments when it was a very happy experience and it's an experience I'm very grateful for. It provoked me to question my faith - to get to grips with faith and what it really meant.

We formed relationships that are stronger than friendships - something which people who have not shared it simply cannot understand. These are the most important people in my life, even if we are now at different ends of the country. There is still that bond.

I think all of us in different ways were working out our family experiences. The local vicar described it as being like a family of children whose parents have stepped out of the room. It wasn't until I reached Cuddesdon that I realised how much effect it had

had. In a sense Cuddesdon was too much of the same, yet never as good. While training at Cuddesdon Theological College the Toc H experience continued through contact with Cuddesdon House, and one of my strong memories is of a trip which Adrian Dudman and Colin Rudd arranged for a group of ordinands to visit Poperinge and look at issues of war, peace and reconciliation.

I talk of the Community House at some length because it was what enabled me to now live the life of an ordained person. Being ordained isn't a job, it's a way of life and you're actually living out that way of life. My experience in Toc H helped me to explore that in an informed way.

This is my first parish - Christ Church, Thurnby Lodge, Leicester. I came as a parish deacon and officially became assistant curate on 7 May, when I was ordained priest. I stay here for another 12 months. I would like to be a vicar in my own parish one day. I'm still involved in Toc H and am a member of Netherhall Ladies Branch.

Toc H is still very important to me for the support I receive now - support from various members and from the Chaplaincy team. That network of support is what impressed me from the start.

The editor was recently invited to spend an evening with the five



The Residents:



Angus



Sheila

It was stepping into a real home - with warmth, love and acceptance abounding in the atmosphere. Supper was on the table and the five residents were smiling and welcoming.

I knew Angus Jardine and Cathy Coombs already, through their work with the Birmingham Outward Group (BOG).

Angus has put a lot of time over the last three years into restoring the garden at Grove Avenue. Since I was last there, many more trees, shrubs and flowers have been planted. He has also made the curtains for the house. Angus is a design graduate and is currently working as a park warden. He helps the Birmingham and Solihull Midweek Conservation Group, which is affiliated to the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. His time at the Community House has helped shape thoughts for a future career in conservation management/environmental work.

Cathy is a clinical psychologist and about to complete her training. She has lived in the Community House for four years and feels that she has invested a lot of herself into the home, but is very grateful for what she has had in return. For the years of her training she continually moved to different jobs and found the Community House a marvellous haven and support: *'I've been based in nine different places in the last three years and living here has given me a stable home life.'*

She feels that belonging to the life of the community has been a very rewarding and moving experience and that life there has a permanently enriching effect: *'The whole is bigger than the sum of the parts.'* She feels that the presence of a member who has moved on, Eric Instone, still lives on somehow in the house and that

the atmosphere is very much fed into by the people who live there and those who have lived there before. There is a sense of mourning when people leave the house. Eric is still sorely missed; he was also a District Secretary of Toc H.

It was easy to recognise that newcomers inherited the atmosphere of the house. I felt completely at home, as indeed I almost invariably feel at home in the presence of Toc H people. I was charmed and enchanted by these young people. They were open, kind, generous, and all of them - without exception - spent their spare time contributing to the world around them.

When a newcomer comes to the house, they are invited to stay as a guest for a few days before the person they are replacing has left. The community feel that this is an important way of continuing the sense of belonging and being valued. Cathy explains: *'We are the centre of the Birmingham community of Toc H. When members come here they are greeted by a community offering a clean and welcoming home. They are always made to feel comfortable and there is a two-way process of feeling valued. We take great pleasure in encouraging the meetings of members here, particularly the older ones. All the meetings are on the calendar and we prepare the room and kitchen beforehand. It is a simple matter of, "they love us and we love them".'*

There are garden parties and district events, as well as the monthly BOG meetings, district executive meetings, district branch meetings and BOG planning meetings. There are monthly house management meetings and staff member Simon Cottingham often joins them for a meal. They ran a project, *Come and Meet Us*, to help break down

From Home

ve residents of the Toc H Community House in Moseley, Birmingham.

barriers between young and elderly, a theme that continued with Kings Norton and Northfield Branches organising a memorable Christmas meal for them. A project planned for the Autumn is a party for 35 people on World Food Day.

Mark Henman took over from Eric Instone as main administrator of the house. He and Cathy went on a Cameo last November for deaf and hearing people to explore their differences. One of the participants was Alison Bryan, a volunteer worker with Friends for the Young Deaf (FYD).

Alison is a law student at Birmingham University and joined the Community House as a resident last December. She was born with a hearing loss that has been progressive and is now profoundly deaf and is learning sign-language. Going on the *Deaf Awareness Cameo* helped restore a bit of her confidence in hearing people, which had taken a severe knock. She was reassured by the revelation that hearing people might be prepared to meet her half way.

Mark was enthusiastic about Alison's contribution to the Toc H ideals of the Community House and felt that her presence had been a considerable boost.

Sheila Ghosh was another recent member of the group. She is an Architecture student and spends most of her spare time doing voluntary work with The Centre of the Earth, a charity offering an environmental awareness programme for children from Birmingham's Winson Green. Sheila uses her graphic design skills to encourage the children and is also involved in puppet work-shops, travelling round schools with a puppeteer. She came across the Community House through Friends of the Earth.

As a house three of the members, Cathy, Angus and Mark, organise the equipment and general administration of BOG.

Mark joined 1 January 1991 through knowing Cathy as a fellow university student when they were at Swansea. Mark was then working as a research assistant at Birmingham University. He studied Microclimatology as a postgraduate at Birmingham University for two years and is currently completing a postgraduate certificate in education. He is also generous about the role Toc H has played in his life and feels that he would probably not have had an opportunity to become a teacher if he had not lived at the Community House: *'It has given me a supportive base from which to study a PGCE and also work at the Development Education Centre in Selly Oak researching projects.'* Mark's key interest is in global aspects of communities and this summer he has been awarded an Earth Watch Grant for a project in the Developing World.

Five people to be proud to know. Five people who, as Alison summarised, *'offer real friendship and sharing. You meet people here that you would not normally meet.'*

From September a new resident is needed at the Community House. It is an experience that comes highly recommended and, as the residents say: *'We don't want people to come here just to have somewhere to live, but to get involved with people. This is a place for things to happen from. Things are happening here.'*

Ruth Boyd

Toc H Community House, Moseley, Birmingham. The house is large and comfortable and provides a focus for a variety of community activities. We are looking for one more resident to share with four other young people.

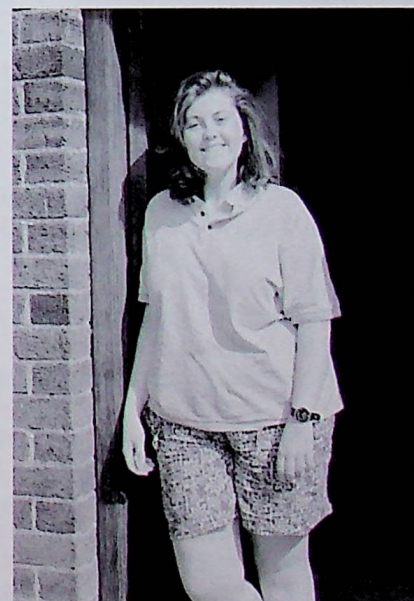
Contact 021 449 4668



Cathy



Mark



Alison

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Over the last year I began to notice a difference in Toc H. It was barely discernable at first. A glint in a member's eye, a wavering smile drifting across the lips that was a precursor to a wide and satisfied grin. A certain lightness of step in even the oldest of members. It was uplifting to see these manifestations of a newness of spirit. When I questioned members about this they felt it was due to the excitement surrounding the Strategic Plan and the appointment of a new Director.

This air of expectancy and excitement is a joy to behold. The advent of three White Knights riding out of the mist to take up the cause of Toc H, Sir Barry, Sir Stuart and Sir Tom (the new staff in Division One), was further evidence of this gale of change about to blow through Toc H. Incidentally, a lady member confessed to me that she found them to be the handsomest and nicest of men; she is a spinster of 86 with, sadly, failing eyesight.

All this air of repressed excitement does not have me fooled for a moment. I know the real cause - the real reason why. It has nothing to do with Strategic Plans, the new Director or White Knights. It is, of course, my retirement!

Bill Bains Leeds

Bill Bains *Leeds*

It is good to see the letters in *Point three* about the Ordination of Women to the priesthood in the Church of England. I have been a member of Toc H since 1967 when I was 19. The Movement supported me at theological college and I was ordained in 1977.

I believe very much in the Ministry of Woman in the Church, but not as priests. I very much sympathise with the points made by Philip Griffin but I too cannot go over to Rome. I do not believe that the General Synod of the Church of England has authority to change what Our Lord and God established for His church on earth. He was God incarnate and not bound by the social conventions of His days on earth. If we wish to be faithful to the Gospel we need to be obedient. Innovations to suit the spirit of this age will not do.

Within the church of God the ministry of women and of men are both vitally important, but they are different according to what our Lord has established.

My own belief is that the church of the New Testament can best be found today in the Orthodox Church. There are 250,000 Orthodox Christians in Britain now, and a good number of English people, both clergy and laity, are finding their way into it. I hope to do the same in the not too distant future.

Revd Stephen Weston

Revd Stephen Weston
Great Yarmouth

Like Richard Cole (letters, *Point three*, June) I could never accept Papal infallibility, but I do most sincerely believe that a dreadful error has been made in our Anglican Communion, sadly now, irrevocable.

Revd C A Cardale
Totnes

Your quote from Galatians 3:28 (Editorial, *Point three*, May) prompts me to speak, after 70 years' Ecumenical worship, on this subject.

Although Philip Griffin seems to me to be confused on the issue, even he quotes 'with God all things are possible'. Indeed, and would he deny the call of His Holy Spirit into the widest ministry of His church, both male and female?

After reading numerous reports on this issue, I am dismayed that so few who oppose womens' ministry mention what is, for me, the predominant answer: the call of God into the Ministry of His Holy Spirit in the worldwide church.

Edwin Harrison
Bakewell

One of the strongest precepts of Toc H is tolerance to, if dissonance from, the views of others. Personally I can tolerate, though not fully understand, people - male and female - who say that they just do not want to have women priests. This is a feeling, a prejudice.

What I do find difficult to tolerate, and almost unforgivable, is the argument of clerics, and people who are supposed to know the Bible, that Jesus did not appoint women disciples - therefore their appointment is contrary to Biblical tradition and truth.

Why cannot they realise that Jesus was, in many respects, too numerous to mention here, a man of His time, and had to be? How could He have appointed women disciples in the outlook and conditions of His time? Difficult enough for men to carry His message; women were not accepted as witnesses.

This is 1994. How can educated, learned people, cling to the past in this way?

Nell Tracey
Llandrindod Wells

I've just spent a most happy Quiet Weekend at Toc H Colsterdale. All Things Bright and Beautiful, the Revd David Mayhew called it - and so it was.

A group of 14 of us enjoyed moorland walks, inspiring talks, peaceful meditation, friendship, laughter and fun. The warden Keith not only gave us splendid meals, but joined in with all we did.

I can't wait for my next holiday at Colsterdale.

Peg Guile
Huddersfield

Toc H Promotion

I read with considerable interest Robert Owen's letter in *Point three*, July, in which he appealed for members to make better use of their local media in spreading the word about Toc H and its activities.

I entirely endorse Robert's message. How can we expect people to take an interest in Toc H if we don't tell them about our Movement, what it stands for, what it does, and how the combination of the two can make a positive and real difference to people's lives?

Over the past few months I have had the wonderful opportunity to meet and speak with members from all over the country, and have been constantly amazed and humbled by the huge variety of tasks and service that are regularly being carried out in the name of Toc H. In every case there are stories to be told about people, places, events and jobs.

Good news is in short supply and yet, daily, members of Toc H are creating good news, but sadly - all too often - we are keeping it to ourselves.

Mike Lyddiard, *Wendover*

Ceremony of Light

I am writing in reply to the letter in the June issue of *Point three* about changing the Ceremony of Light.

Many members value tradition, which sadly seems an out-of-date cliché these days. Even though times change, the original ideas behind the formation of Toc H are still valid. The Ceremony of Light is part and parcel of the Movement, and the poem by Laurence Binyon can also be used in remembrance of members and friends who have died and should NOT be excluded therefrom.

We are not celebrating D-Day. If the world is going to be a safer place in which to live, we must never forget the sacrifices made in the past by people of all ages, civilian and armed forces. It is very important that commemorative events continue to be held in order that younger generations realise that the freedom they enjoy had to be fought hard for.

Evelyn Hunt
St Albans

Multitudes of men gave their all in two World Wars so that we might live in freedom (yes, I did say freedom), something we still enjoy in our country to this day, and which was preserved through their sacrifice. Time cannot be counted in years, it's only 'yesterday' that our island was in danger of being invaded by an aggressor.

May we always remember these men through The Main Resolution of Toc H and that which goes hand in hand with it, the Ceremony of Light in the context of Laurence Binyon's words.

...And there are the reasons to commemorate D-Day.

Audrey Moore, *St Albans*

Money Matters - People Count

It was good to read the article from Director Mike Lyddiard, in July's *Point three*. Without doubt he is right in saying that no Movement, not even Toc H, can exist and fulfil its mission without adequate resources, both human and financial. As in any undertaking, good housekeeping in both spheres will ensure success.

Value for Money has always been my watchword in money matters, but it is the value of the people factor which concerns me most.

We have a Mission Statement which says, among other things, that we aim to 'lessen the prejudices which divide people'. This is a laudable aim, but it is hard to equate the high costs of the Movement to the actual levels of activity directed to such an end. In reality I feel that all too many branches - and even our other Methods - seem to attract 'birds of a feather'. The mixture that our founder would have expected is rarely, if ever, achieved.

What are the actual factors that cause social differences? I think of race, religion, money, sex, class, education, health... and I'm sure readers could add many more. The question that raises itself is this: *are our resources directly addressed to these causes of division in a way that makes a positive and lasting difference?*

The current centrally funded activities of Toc H cost more than £1¼ million pounds a year, and this figure is growing. We should all be asking ourselves whether *our* bit of Toc H, branch, project, staff job or whatever - measures up to the Value for Money yardstick?

Mike's comment on the Bangladeshi child is true - the effective mixture of people and finance being one sure means of gauging value for money in Toc H. However, the actual task of relieving distress is the aim of a number of charities, many of whom succeed on a far greater scale than Toc H could ever realise. For me it seems that, unless we accompany such works with progress in the specific area of the Four Points of the Compass, we fail in the vision that inspired the creation of the Movement.

From my experience, there would seem to be almost unlimited finance available *if* we began to be really effective in our chosen mission and followed it more faithfully. All too often we have retreated from being a 'frontier movement' to becoming a kind of philosophical think-tank, or a base camp - where we look to others to actually *do* the fighting at the so-called sharp end. As the director said in his 'thought for the month' - we actually give our money to other charities to do *their* work instead of funding Toc H activities.

The unique purpose of Toc H is to break down barriers between people. Our success - or otherwise - in achieving this mission needs to be measured against all 'Money Matters'. We need *people* to stand up and be *counted* in their commitment to the special purpose for which Toc H was created.

Ted Tunnadine
*Central Investment Team Member and
former Honorary Treasurer*

BRANCH NEWS

Welcome to 20 New Members

Helga Bald, Sylvia Fletcher,
Hildegard Wagner (Berlin J)
Anne E Powell, Dianne Turner (Birmingham District)
Trevor A Beech (Central Branch)
Paul Pridgeon (Cirencester J)
Ivy M Bound (Gorleston J)
Helen Kuhl, Sandra Pinno, Thomas Rockmann,
Ursula Schrader (Munster J)
David G N Best, Geoffrey Eccles, Linda S Eccles,
John Hunt (Paderborn J)
Louie Parry, Edna E Whittall (Prestatyn & District J)
Rhona M Evans, Lesley J Haggis (Winsford J)



Good Luck to Leeds based Development Officer **Bill Bains**, who retires from the staff at the end of August. Bill has been a member of Toc H since 1960 and a member of staff for 22 years. Among his many achievements, Bill has been particularly

successful in encouraging the involvement of young people in the Movement, through establishing the TAG groups. We wish him a long and successful retirement and hope that this magazine will continue to be an outlet for his considerable writing skills.

Thank You For Your Welcome

I would like to use *Point three* to thank all those present for the warm reception given to me at Staff Conference. I was extremely apprehensive on arrival, wondering what reaction my Cannock Chase 'nuts and bolts' presentation would receive. The friendly welcome and encouragement given to me went a long way towards helping me relax. During *Question Time* I was asked whether I obtained membership support for the Cannock Chase project easier than a Development Officer would. Sadly, my honest answer had to be 'yes'. I have so often heard the phrase, 'they are Development Officers, let them get on with it; that's what we pay them for.'

I can only say that, unless members and staff are prepared to work in teams, there is little chance of making enough impact to turn our Movement round from decline. Our staff not only deserve support, our survival depends on it. Staff are our largest resource and must be used effectively and wisely by the membership.

Chris Williams



Congratulations to Steve and Karen Ward who were married at St John's Church, Harborne, Birmingham on 25 June. Steve is a Toc H member and leader with the Birmingham Outward Group (BOG). The editor joined former Hon Treasurer Ted Tunnadine and his wife Jean at the wedding.



A Fine (Toc H) Romance!

Congratulations to Denny Branch members, Shona and Daniel Barrie who were married on 19 April. Toc H not only encourages friendship, it creates romance - Shona (née Peattie) and Daniel met while working for the Movement.

Congratulations to Griffith Thomas Asquith, secretary of the **Ouse & Hull District Branch**, who was awarded the MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. 'Tommy', as he is generally known, is a member of very long standing and was chairman of the former East Yorkshire Area for a number of years and later the East and West Yorkshire Area.

Coney Hall, with assistance from **Hayes (Kent)** and **New Addington Branches**, held their annual Strawberry Tea Party on 25 June for 100 disabled people from the South Eastern Area. The weather was fine, the Crystal Palace concert band provided the music, and all agreed that it was a wonderful and enjoyable occasion.

Director Mike Lyddiard was guest speaker at the Mid East Region Area Day, held at Ipswich on 30 April.



Regulars and visitors to **The Pheasant Inn** at **Wednesfield** are this year raising money for two charities - **Toc H** and **Cystic Fibrosis**. One of the events was a carwash, which raised £78.



Members of **Linthorpe Women's Branch** celebrated their 40th anniversary at the end of April. Founder member Mrs Sheila Brass travelled from Ashbourne and many former members and friends also attended. The Rededication Service was conducted by the Revd David Mayhew.



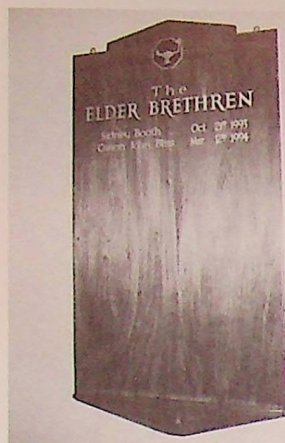
Members of **Parkhurst Branch** once again made a splendid effort for **Khasdobir Friendship Day**. Two volunteers toured the High Street in Newport, advertising a coffee morning to be followed by ploughmans lunches, and the hall was soon full of people. Stalls were laden with cakes, bric-a-brac and books and there was a tombola and raffle. The magnificent sum of £517 was raised.

Members of **Buckingham Branch** continue with their popular twice weekly book stall and takings so far this year amount to over £1,200. Special thanks to the ladies from the branch, who prepared the excellent display for the church Flower Festival.



A Journey of Discovery Louie Palmer, known to many as **Louis XIII** - she was the youngest of 13 - writes: 'I joined **Toc H Women** in **Melton Mowbray** in 1978 when I was invited to join them on a day's tour of the **Wedgwood Pottery Factory**. I found that many members had been at school with me and, as a widow, this was the answer to my loneliness. I went on lots of self-catering holidays with them - there was, and still is, plenty to look forward to and get involved in. At one time I was the secretary of **Melton and Charnwood District**, then I became Pilot of our women's branch, and I have been secretary for more than three years. I belong to a concert party called the **Unpredictables** - which has raised over £3000 for charity in the last three years. My life is very full and I love it. Thank you **Toc H** for getting me on the right track.'

Spotland Branch member Miss Elizabeth Stott, at 96, is believed to be one of the oldest surviving relations of the Rochdale Pioneers - who founded the Co-operative movement. She is the great-granddaughter of James Standing, one of the 28 pioneers who was remembered in a recent memorial service at Rochdale Cemetery at which Elizabeth was a guest of honour.



*The new memorial board at **Morecambe Branch** in memory of the Elder Brethren. June's Point three told the story of the theft of the two branch lamps.*

Noel Wolstenholme would like readers to know that the lamps were found, carefully wrapped in newspaper, at a railway line on the outskirts of Morecambe.



The 1994 Toc H Australia National Leadership Training Group at Canberra.



*Audrey Smith of **Cleveland District Branch** celebrates 50 years in Toc H with Gill Sunley of **Guisborough Branch**.*

Gill reports that there was a great turnout of members at the celebration party for Audrey, which was hosted by Guisborough Branch.

Thank You to Toc H in Melton Mowbray

I recently attended a joint meeting of the Toc H Branches in Melton Mowbray and found it inspiring to come across such a thriving element

of Toc H. The commitment, drive and energy of those I

met left me convinced that, within the Branches, members can and do play an extremely active role in reaching out to the community and in promoting the aims of this Movement.

My Melton Mowbray experience may well have been typical of what Branches and Groups throughout the country can and do achieve, regardless of age, and it has made me realise what a major contribution they make to the achievement of Toc H.

I have long been impressed by the warmth and friendship extended by members, and my friends at Melton were no exception. The welcome could not have been warmer.

There are three Branches in Melton; a new one is being formed, and there is a very active Friendship Circle. Separate units, and yet my perception was that they are so well integrated that to the casual observer it is impossible to see the joins!

The extent of their activities overwhelmed me and led me to believe that someone needed to blow their trumpets for them as loudly as possible. I hope that more Branches will be encouraged to do likewise, so that we can shout from the rooftops that Toc H in the Branches is alive and vital.

The following is a list of some of their achievements:

- Members provide cars and drivers to take a group of visually impaired and their escorts to a monthly social gathering.
- A birthday scheme has been established for residents of a local home for the elderly. Each of the 40 residents is visited on their birthday, to be given a card and a present.
- Regular visits are made to patients in local hospitals and residential homes.
- There is a store at the Branch rooms, with a large number of wheelchairs which are kept fully maintained and are loaned out on request.
- In partnership with the Lions and Rotary, over 400 Christmas parcels are made up and delivered from the Branch rooms to elderly and needy people in the town.
- Each year, a group comprising the elderly and disabled are taken on an outing to Skegness. The Branches raise funds to cover the entire cost and provide the volunteers.
- A Christmas tea party is organised for 100 visually impaired people and their friends.
- The Branches have collaborated in contributing towards the provision of physiotherapy equipment for the local hospital and a hydrotherapy pool for a local school for people with learning difficulties.
- There is ongoing work with another 'special' residential



school in providing birthday gifts, and regular visits and activities which are reciprocated, so much so that it is difficult to see who has adopted whom!

- Local flag day collections are undertaken for Alexandra Rose Day and LEPRO as well as for Toc H.
- A coffee morning and second-hand bookstall is run every Saturday at the Branch Rooms.
- Outings are organised to give the less able members a chance to visit places of interest and each of the units acts as host to visiting members from the other units.
- Every hospital patient in Melton is visited at Christmas and is given a card. The one concession to age is that schoolchildren now provide the carol singing.
- Each Maundy Thursday 250 residents of nursing homes and hospital patients are given a small gift of personal comfort.

■ Support is given to Talbot House and also to Cuddesdon House, through the Friends.

■ The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council (ARC) was started by Melton 25 years ago.

And so it goes.... And this is to say nothing about the regular Branch meetings and the celebration of Light and Homegoing Prayers.

Since my visit, the idea of membership working and bringing people together has taken on an entirely new meaning. I am proud to be associated with such a Movement and strongly encourage more Branches to publicise the good work that they do.

Thank You Melton!

Stewart Casimir ■

Tributes

We regret to announce the death of the following members

In May	Enid Cozens (Late Southdown District) Sydney T Gatesman (Late Barkingside) Doris 'Dorothy' Lamb (Enfield) Lilian F Scales (Seaford)
In June	Phyllis M Gue (Late Totnes) Thomas Lean (Jedburgh) Henry D 'Harry' Mills (Lymington J) Gladys M Huddy (Loddon Vale District) Amos Nevett (Llanarmon-yn-ial) Derek Parry (Welshpool) Ralph Pyman (Worthing)

Harry Mills: I suppose the thing I remember best about Harry, from our time at Wendover together, was his astonishing knowledge of the British Rail network. Whenever I had a complicated journey to undertake I would go to him and he would tell me out of his head exactly how it could best be done.

He joined Toc H in 1941. He was a member of Mill Hill Branch in North London and played an active part in the development of their celebrated and successful Music Club. But he wanted to serve Toc H in wider spheres. He served for several years on the Central Executive Committee and then, when he retired in 1978, he came to Wendover as our Properties Secretary. He worked closely with Don Lockhart and Toc H owes much to their combined practical skills. He played an important part in the development of the Port Penrhyn Centre in North Wales. He was devoted to the concept of the Marks (as our residential houses were then known) and expended great efforts in trying to adapt them to suit modern times. In retirement he lived in Lymington and remained active in Toc H in the Southern Region.

All of us who knew him will miss Harry, for his humour and friendliness, and for his devotion and loyalty to the Toc H he loved.

KP-B

Jedburgh Branch suffered a severe loss on 8 June when Chairman **Tom Lean** died at the age of 68, after a short illness. His passing will leave a big gap both in the branch and in the town of Jedburgh. We will miss his leadership, boundless energy and enthusiasm. He enjoyed his work in Toc H and his keen interest in the welfare of his fellow men. His loss will also be keenly felt in the local community, where his valuable work and kind support was an everyday feature in his life. We will remember a good and true friend.

ES

Gladys Huddy died on 6 June aged 85, after a lifetime spent in Toc H. She was a member of Reading Ladies Branch for over 40 years and became a District member when the branch closed. Gladys worked hard for the blind and elderly and her skill in making cakes and soft toys ensured a stall for branch funds was always well supplied. Gladys was a true friend in Toc H to all who knew her.

MB

Sydney Gatesman, a long standing member of Toc H, died on 4 May at the age of 93. He was a member of Barkingside Branch when he was younger and, following his retirement, was a guide at All Hallows Church for 17 years. He was a great character, with a ready cockney wit. We miss him very much.

IB

Enfield Women's Branch report the sudden death of **Doris Lamb** on 22 May. She was a very loyal and supportive member before moving to Brighton to look after three sisters when they were in failing health. 'Lambie' retained her membership of Enfield Branch because she she was so happy here.

DD

Enid Cozens died on 29 May, just a few weeks before her 100th birthday. In the 1920s and 30s, in the days of the League of Women Helpers and Women's Section, she was a leader in the Harrow Weald District. On retirement in 1958 she moved with her husband to Aldwick, Bognor Regis, and together they worked tirelessly for Toc H. Enid was the leading spirit in founding the Aldwick Branch. Her long lifetime was spent in the service of others, in which Toc H was the inspiration. Her husband died last year.

RER

Ken Richardson of Nottingham City Branch, and a Toc H member for 69 years, died on 21 May. Throughout his long membership, his untiring efforts and enthusiasm enhanced the Movement - of which he was so proud - and working with him was a rewarding and joyful experience. Whenever there was a problem, Ken was always a sympathetic and understanding listener. He set standards for the rest of us and he will be sadly missed.

BP

Amos Nevett, a founder member of Llanarmon-yn-ial, died on 16 June at the age of 71. A Welsh speaker, a gifted engineer and mechanic, a born raconteur with a never failing fund of stories, he was always ready to drop everything and go the assistance of anyone who needed help. He was greatly loved and sadly missed. Ffarwel hen gyfaill - Farewell, old friend.

RWH

Arthur Griffiths passed away on 1 February. He was a founder member of Carmarthen Branch in the early 30s and continued to support Toc H throughout his life. He will be sadly missed by family and friends and is remembered with love and affection by the community as a whole.

JEG

The Still Centre - The Icon

A weekend exploring the design, making and symbolism of the Icon. We shall use Icons in our exploration of meditation and silence.

Cuddesdon House, Near Oxford
7-9 October 1994

Adrian Dudman and the Revd Alan Johnson will lead the weekend and they will be joined by Lionel and Brenda Wilde, from Pisca Design, who make and sell high quality reproduction Icons.

Cost, including accommodation and meals, is £60.

Further details from:

Margaret Winstanley
Toc H HQ
1 Forest Close
Wendover,
Bucks HP22 6BT
Tel: 0296 623911

Coach Trip to Talbot House, Poperinge

14 - 20 September

There are five places still available for this trip, which will include visits to the Somme and Antwerp.

Cost: £186 plus £12.40 insurance.

For more details, please contact:
Jack and Pat Turner, 60 Hall End Road,
Wootton, Beds MK43 9HP
Tel: 0234 768410

Point three For the Blind

The magazine is now available in tape form for readers who are either blind or partially sighted. Several members have already taken advantage of this excellent service, which is only £3, including postage, for 12 months. Write to: Harry Bailey, 27 Harrowden Road, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 3BG

Facing and Working with Failure - 2

Convent of St Lawrence, Belper

30 September - 2 October 1994

Because of the success of the weekend held in April there has been a demand for this training event to be repeated. The weekend will be run by Barry Englefield and Ann Crouch and will explore failure and its implications for the Branch, Project, Circle or any other event. What can you do about it? Where do the responsibilities lie?

For further details please contact:

Bill Bains,
25 Whinmoor Gardens,
Leeds LS14 1AF
Tel: 0532 659965

Working with Conflict

Alison House, Matlock

21 - 23 September 1994

This event seeks to help us to understand ourselves and each other in situations of conflict. During it we will extend our skills and learn some new ones for handling conflicts that inevitably arise when people work together. We will practice methods of resolving conflict in a safe environment.

Marion McNaughton - Freelance Trainer
Cost: £120 waged. £80 unwaged.
Members £25 (concessions).

For further details please contact:

Jackie Bartlett,
Toc H Headquarters,
1 Forest Close, Wendover,
Bucks HP22 6BT

Time to Spare ?

Does any member have time to spare to be able to carry out some research for a fellow member at the newspaper library at Colindale? Please contact:
H.Sydney Cox, 12 Esplanade, Burnham,
Somerset TA8 1BE

Small Ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 10p a word (minimum £1) plus VAT, to *Point three* Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H Headquarters, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

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